

Poached Pears

INGREDIENTS

4–6 small ripe pears, peeled, with stem left on.
1/2 bottle of red wine
1 orange
3/4 cup sugar, brown sugar or maple syrup
1 tsp vanilla
1 cinnamon stick
4 whole cloves
1 tsp ground cardamom or 5 crushed cardamom pods
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg

2 slices fresh red beet (no need to peel, for extra vibrant color-optional)
1/2 cup pomegranate seeds for garnish
For the Cardamom Whipped Cream (optional)
1/4–1/2 tsp ground cardamom (to taste)
2 tablespoons sugar
1/2 tsp vanilla
1 cup heavy whipping cream

DIRECTIONS

1. Peel the pears, and slice a little off the bottom so they stand up nice and flat on the counter.
2. In a small pot, combine the wine, zest and juice from an orange, sugar, vanilla, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, cardamom and beet slices. Bring to a simmer and stir to allow beet slices to infuse their color.
3. Add the peeled pears and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer uncovered, gently stirring and turning the pears to get uniform coloring. Simmer until they're easily pierced with the tip of a knife, at their thickest place – about 25 minutes depending on the size of the pears. With a slotted spoon, gently transfer the pears to a plate standing upright. (You could do this ahead and refrigerate.)
4. Strain the liquid and return it to the stove, and reduce. Bring to a gentle simmer and cook until thickened and syrupy over medium-low heat, and reduced by two-thirds, about 15-20 minutes. Taste and adjust the sweetness if you like.
5. To make cardamom whipped cream- place all ingredients in a mixer with whisk attachment..and whisk until stiff peaks form, or for a workout, whisk by hand in a mixing bowl. Whisk just until the cream reaches stiff peaks. Store any unused portion in an airtight container for up to 10 hours. When ready to use, whisk for 10 to 15 seconds.
6. Serve: Place each pear on a plate and spoon some red wine sauce over the pears.
7. Garnish with pomegranate seeds and whipped cream on the side.

This recipe is from Feasting at Home